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Report of the Commission on Human Rights on its fifth special session (17-19 October 2000)

Administrative and programme budget implications of Commission on Human Rights resolution S-5/1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 31 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council

1. At the 6th meeting of its fifth special session, on 19 October 2000, the Commission on Human Rights adopted resolution S-5/1, on grave and massive violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people by Israel. Prior to the adoption of the resolution and pursuant to rule 28 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission heard an oral statement of the programme budget implications.

A. Requests contained in Commission resolution S-5/1

2. In paragraph 6 of its resolution S-5/1, the Commission on Human Rights decided:

(a) To establish, on an urgent basis, a human rights inquiry commission, mandated: (i) to gather and compile information on violations of human rights and acts which constitute grave breaches of international humanitarian law by the Israeli occupying Power in the occupied Palestinian territories; and (ii) to provide the Commission with its conclusions and recommendations, with the aim of preventing the repetition of the recent human rights violations;

(b) To request the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: (i) to undertake an urgent visit to the occupied Palestinian territories to take stock of the violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people by the Israeli occupying Power; (ii) to facilitate the activities of the mechanisms of the Commission in implementation of the resolution; (iii) to keep the Commission informed of developments; and (iv) to report to the Commission at its fifty-seventh session, and, on an interim basis, to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session;

(c) To request the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced

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persons, the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to carry out immediate missions to the occupied Palestinian territories and to report their findings to the Commission at its fifty-seventh session and, on an interim basis, to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

B. Activities by which the requests would be implemented

3. Pursuant to the above provisions, the following activities would be carried out:

(a) A commission of inquiry consisting of five members would be established. The commission would hold pre-mission preparations in Geneva lasting three weeks and undertake a six-week mission to the region. Interpretation services would be provided to the meetings of the commission;

(b) As an integral part of the commission of inquiry, four human rights investigators and two forensic experts, accompanied by five staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, five security officers and two interpreters, would visit the region for a period of six weeks;

(c) The High Commissioner for Human Rights, accompanied by three staff members of the Office of the High Commissioner, would undertake an urgent mission of five days' duration to the occupied Palestinian territories;

(d) The six Special Rapporteurs, the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons and two members of the Working Group referred to in paragraph 6 (c) of the resolution would undertake a mission of five working days' duration to the region, accompanied by eight staff members of the Office of the High Commissioner;

(e) The reports requested under paragraph 6 (b) and (c) of the resolution would be submitted to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-seventh session and, on an interim basis, to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

C. Modifications to the approved programme of work for the biennium 2000-2001

4. The activities referred to above would fall under programme 19, Human rights, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001,[1] and section 22, Human rights, subprogramme 3, Advisory services, technical cooperation, support to human rights fact-finding procedures and field activities, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.[2]

5. In order to reflect the provisions of the resolution, the narrative of paragraph 22.79 of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 would be modified as follows:

(a) Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies

(ii) Parliamentary documentation

c. Commission on Human Rights. Add one report of the human rights inquiry commission for Palestine and change the total number of reports from 40 to 41;

(iii) Other services provided. Add meetings of the human rights inquiry commission for Palestine.

D. Additional requirements

6. The estimated full cost of the activities described above is shown in the table below.

	United States dollars
Section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services	
Temporary assistance for meetings (four interpreters at Geneva ($342 per day each for 21 days))	**28 800**
Section 22, Human rights	
1. Human rights inquiry commission (assumes three weeks of pre-mission and three weeks of post-mission work in Geneva, and six weeks of travel to the region)	
Five members of the commission	
In Geneva:	
Travel (average of $5,000 each)	25 000
Daily subsistence allowance ($230 per day)	48 300
To the region:	
Travel (average of $3,360 each)	16 800
Daily subsistence allowance	68 250
Subtotal	**158 350**
Four human rights investigators and two forensic experts	
Travel to the region (at $5,000 each)	30 000
Daily subsistence allowance	57 960
Remuneration (three months at P-4 level)	133 200
Subtotal	**221 160**
Two interpreters to the region	
Travel at $3,360 each	6 720
Daily subsistence allowance	19 320
Subtotal	**26 040**
Five Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights staff and five security staff	
Travel at $3,360 each	33 600
Daily subsistence allowance	96 600
Subtotal	**130 200**

	United States dollars
Subtotal, inquiry commission	**535 750**
2. High Commissioner's mission to the region (High Commissioner and three accompanying staff for seven days)	
High Commissioner	
Travel	3 360
Daily subsistence allowance	2 275
Staff	
Travel (at $3,360 each)	10 080
Daily subsistence allowance	4 830
Subtotal	**20 545**
3. Missions of the six Special Rapporteurs, one Representative of the Secretary-General and two members of the Working Group referred to in paragraph 6 (c) of Commission resolution S-5/1 and eight staff of the Office of the High Commissioner accompanying them (assumes seven days of travel to the field)	
Nine Rapporteurs/Representative/Working Group members	
Travel (at $5,000 each)	45 000
Daily subsistence allowance	20 475
Eight staff	
Travel (at $3,360 each)	26 880
Daily subsistence allowance	12 880
Subtotal	**105 235**
4. Operating expenses in support of the field activities of the commission	
Rental of premises for six weeks	8 000
Video/photographic equipment	12 000
Communications cost and equipment	20 000
Vehicle rental and drivers	20 000
Miscellaneous supplies and services	20 000
Subtotal	**80 000**
Total, section 22	**741 600**
Total requirements under sections 2 and 22	**770 400**

E. Potential for absorption

7. Provision has been made under section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, not only for programmed meetings, but also for meetings that might be authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences is consistent with the pattern of meetings of past years. On that basis, it is estimated that the amount of $28,800 relating to the remuneration of four interpreters required to service the human rights inquiry commission in

Geneva could be absorbed within the permanent conference-servicing capacity of the Organization.

8. The resources approved by the General Assembly for the current biennium under section 22, Human rights, relate to programmed activities for the biennium 2000-2001. It is not anticipated that the additional amount of $741,600 required to implement resolution S-5/1 of the Commission on Human Rights will be able to be absorbed within existing resources.

F. Contingency fund

9. It will be recalled that under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources available from the contingency fund, those activities can be implemented only by redeploying resources from low-priority areas or modifying existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred to a later biennium.

10. At this stage, no activities can be identified for termination, deferral, curtailment or modification under section 22, Human rights, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 in order to accommodate the additional requirement of $741,600 referred to above.

G. Summary

11. **Should the Economic and Social Council decide to endorse resolution S-5/1 of the Commission on Human Rights, an additional amount of $741,600 would be required over and above the resources approved under section 22, Human rights, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. This provision would represent a charge against the contingency fund and as such would require a related additional appropriation.**

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/53/6/Rev.1).

[2] Ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/54/6/Rev.1).